

## **FACT SHEET**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE FREE TRADE AREA OF THE AMERICAS (FTAA) TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE (TNC) MEETING**

**September 26-28, 2001  
Managua, Nicaragua**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) Meeting of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) represents the latest step towards creating the world's largest free trade area, involving 34 countries with a combined population of 800 million people. Coming only two weeks after the tragic terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, DC and Pennsylvania, the meeting of the hemisphere's vice ministers of trade demonstrated that the hemisphere's and the Bush Administration's commitment to achieve greater economic integration remain strong.

The Administration's trade strategy calls for global, regional and bilateral efforts to negotiate the best deals for American farmers, businesses, workers, and consumers. The FTAA therefore complements the U.S. promotion of the launch of a new round of trade negotiations in the World Trade Organization to open markets around the world, and the negotiation of U.S.-Chile and U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreements.

In Managua, the TNC:

- Issued a statement condemning the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States and reaffirming the determination of all FTAA countries to proceed according to the deadlines established at the FTAA Ministerial meeting in Buenos Aires in April 2001.
- Reemphasized the Minister's instructions to prepare by April 1, 2002, the technical guidelines for the market access negotiations in merchandise trade, services, government procurement and investment, so that these negotiations begin no later than May 15, 2002; to intensify the process of reducing differences in the texts to the maximum extent possible so that a second draft can be reviewed at the Ministerial in October 2002; and, to develop a draft text on the general and institutional aspects of the agreement in the Technical Committee on Institutional Issues.
- Reviewed the progress to date in the nine negotiating groups\* and four non-negotiating groups.\*\*
- Developed guidelines on treatment of the levels of development and size, based on input from the Consultative Group on Smaller Economies, as mandated by the Ministers in April. The TNC provided to the Negotiating Groups a flexible series of guidelines aimed at promoting the participation of smaller and less developed countries in the FTAA process.

The guidelines include a process for considering specific proposals on technical assistance and capacity building.

- Advanced transparency and the participation of civil society in the FTAA process by providing guidance to the Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society on proposed steps to enhance outreach to members of civil society.
- Provided guidance on the interaction of Negotiating Groups with each other and with the Technical Committee on Institutional Issues (TCI) on general and institutional issues.
- Adopted the October 2001 - April 2002 calendar for the meetings of Negotiating Groups and Committees. This period leads up to the April 1, 2002 deadline for Negotiating Groups' proposals for the TNC's approval on the technical guidelines under which negotiations on market access rules - in merchandise trade, services, government procurement, and investment – will proceed.
- Began consideration of the March 2003 transfer of the FTAA Administrative Secretariat from Panama to Mexico.

*\* The nine FTAA negotiating groups are: Market Access, Agriculture, Services, Investment, Government Procurement, Intellectual Property Rights, Subsidies/Anti-Dumping/Countervailing Duties, Competition Policy, and Dispute Settlement.*

*\*\* The four FTAA non-negotiating groups are: Technical Committee on Institutional Issues, Committee of Government Representatives on Civil Society, Consultative Group on Smaller Economies, and Joint Private-Public Sector Committee of Experts on Electronic Commerce.*